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(54) Title: CLEANING CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

(57) Abstract: Oil contaminated drill cuttings are contacted with an oil soluble surfactant with agitation which causes the hydrophobic moiety of the surfactant to interact with the oil. Next, an aqueous polymer formulation comprising a polymer having polar and/or ionic functionality is added and mixed. Then, an excess volume of water is added with gentle agitation and the mixture is allowed to settle, whereupon the cuttings sediment to the bottom of the receptacle in which the process is undertaken and the supernatant contains a colloidal suspension of particles which comprise oil, surfactant and polymer. The drill cuttings may then be separated from the supernatant by filtration. The supernatant may be treated with a flocculating agent to cause the colloidal particles to sediment. They too may then be separated.